

# PROJECT SUMMARY

## US 421 IMPROVEMENTS/ DANIEL BOONE PARKWAY

From US 421 West of Boone to the Relocated US 421 East of Boone  
Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina

TIP Project Number U-2703



### What is the Proposed Project?

There is a proposal for improvements to US 421 (King Street) in the vicinity of Boone in Watauga County. The section of US 421 to be improved, as part of this project, begins near SR 1107 (NC 105 Bypass) west of Boone and extends eastward through downtown Boone. This project will connect to the relocated portion of US 421 east of Boone.

#### Proposed Corridor Alternatives include:

- improvements to the existing location of US 421 (King Street);
- rerouting US 421 to a new location north of King Street; and
- rerouting US 421 to a new location south of King Street.

The study of US 421 is still in the preliminary phase, but the proposed alternatives on new location are designed as four-lane, median-divided roadways. The relocated US 421 is proposed to have full control of access, meaning there will not be any at-grade intersections or driveway openings allowed directly to the new roadway. There will be interchanges with major roads such as the existing US 421, NC 105, US 321/221, and NC 194.

For a map of the proposed locations, entitled "Corridor Alternatives," please see the contact information on the back of this sheet.

### Purpose and Need of the Proposed Project

US 421 in the vicinity of the Town of Boone is routed along King Street, the primary downtown corridor. This portion of US 421 (King Street) is experiencing congestion that will continue to worsen in the future. This congestion is due to the mixture of local traffic along King Street with destinations in downtown Boone and through traffic using US 421, US 321/221, and NC 105.

The mobility and safety problems that exist along US 421 (King Street) can be improved if the through traffic using the roadway is separated from the local traffic. The improvements should:

- Reduce the mixed use of US 421 (King Street) through downtown Boone by local and through traffic;
- Improve roadway system linkages by providing a more direct connection between US 421 and US 321/221 to the south and NC 105 to the west;
- Improve traffic flow along US 421 (King Street) and the other major roadways in the area; and
- Improve safety along US 421 (King Street) and the other major roadways in the area.

## How the Proposed Project has been Studied to Date...

Proposals to reroute US 421 to a roadway on a new location have been included in local long-range transportation plans since the 1970s.

- 1995 The Town of Boone requests that NCDOT further study the proposal to reroute US 421.
- 1997 NCDOT conducts a preliminary environmental review and holds a Public Information Workshop.
- 1999 A local transportation task force is formed to study transportation issues in the area.
- 2001 The task force presents its final recommendations, which include a concept for the type of roadway preferred, an additional alternative (Corridor #6), and the naming of the new roadway as the “Daniel Boone Parkway.”
- 2002 In response to a request from the Town of Boone, NCDOT begins a detailed study of all alternatives developed to date. As part of the detailed study, the following information has been developed: traffic analysis, preliminary designs, cost estimates, and potential impacts to the built and natural environments.
- 2003 A multi-agency Project Study Team meets to define the scope and purpose of the project.
- 2004 A Citizens Informational Workshop is held March 11, 2004.
- 2005 The multi-agency Project Study Team meets to consider all the information on all Corridor Alternatives.

## What Happens Next?

The Project Study Team is currently working to narrow the list of proposed Corridor Alternatives. The team, which includes representatives from federal, state, and local agencies for transportation and environmental planning, is considering community input and information about benefits and impacts of each alternative. Once the alternatives to be studied further are selected, this study will conclude and a report documenting the results will be developed.

After the conclusion of this study, the Town of Boone and/or Watauga County may decide to revise their long-range transportation plans to include their “locally preferred alternative.” The decision then becomes whether to include the proposed project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for funding. The timeframe for this decision by the Board of Transportation is not known. Once the project is funded in the TIP, additional studies will be completed in order to select the final location of the roadway. Additional opportunities for citizen input will be offered throughout the process.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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